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**FRAMEWORK FOR COOPERATION BETWEEN
THE UNITED NATIONS RELIEF AND WORKS AGENCY FOR
PALESTINE REFUGEES IN THE NEAR EAST AND
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA FOR 2016**

I. Introduction

This Framework for Cooperation sets forth understandings between the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (hereinafter referred to as “UNRWA”) and the United States of America (hereinafter referred to as “the United States” or “U.S.”). The United States and UNRWA have been working in partnership through a Framework for Cooperation since 2005 to provide humanitarian assistance to UNRWA’s beneficiaries in accordance with its mandate as approved by the United Nations General Assembly. The United States and UNRWA review their Framework for Cooperation annually to advance shared objectives. It is understood that this document, in its entirety, constitutes policy commitments by UNRWA and the United States, and is therefore not intended to be legally binding.

II. Shared Goals and Priorities

UNRWA was established in 1949 to provide support to Palestine refugees pending the just solution of their plight. It operates in Jordan, Gaza, Lebanon, Syria, and the West Bank on a budget mostly financed by voluntary contributions, and employs more than 30,900 staff to provide education, primary health care, relief and social services, infrastructure and camp improvement, and emergency and other assistance to Palestine refugees in its areas of operation. In the 65 years since its inception, the number of Palestine refugees and others registered by UNRWA has increased through natural population growth to more than 5.6 million persons.

Assisting vulnerable populations through effective provision of humanitarian assistance is a key element of U.S. foreign policy. The goal of U.S. support to UNRWA is to ensure that Palestine refugees live in dignity with an enhanced human development potential until a comprehensive and just solution is secured. These objectives dovetail with UNRWA’s ongoing goals to address the needs of Palestine refugees through the provision of basic education, health, relief and social services, and emergency and other assistance. They also promote the human development of Palestine refugees by improving living conditions, economic potential, livelihoods, and human rights.

The United States and UNRWA plan to work together to address the following strategic priorities in 2016:

- Efficient and effective delivery of core education, health, and relief services to the most vulnerable Palestine refugees, as well as protection of Palestine refugees, as articulated in UNRWA’s 2016-2021 Medium Term Strategy.
- Continued provision of emergency assistance to Palestine refugees experiencing the impacts of acute and protracted conflict across UNRWA’s fields of operation, alongside efforts to improve the safety and security of UNRWA personnel operating in areas of conflict or insecurity.
- Conformance with conditions on U.S. contributions, pursuant to section 301 (c) of the Foreign Assistance Act , as amended, and consistent with UN humanitarian principles of neutrality and impartiality and UN values, including the rejection of racism in all forms.

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- Improved financial stability through complementary efforts to implement concrete and lasting measures to control and contain the growth of UNRWA's core costs and mobilize additional resources.

III. Conformance with Section 301(c)

The United States appreciates its ongoing close consultation with UNRWA regarding section 301(c) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended (hereinafter referred to as "section 301(c)"), which states: "No contributions by the United States shall be made to (UNRWA) except on the condition that (UNRWA) take all possible measures to assure that no part of the United States contribution shall be used to furnish assistance to any refugee who is receiving military training as a member of the so-called Palestine Liberation Army or any other guerilla-type organization or who has engaged in any act of terrorism."

The United States and UNRWA share concerns about the threat of terrorism, including within the context of the United Nations' firm commitment to counter terrorism and the conditions on U.S. contributions to UNRWA under section 301(c). To this end, UNRWA is committed to taking all possible measures to ensure that funding provided by the United States to UNRWA is not used to provide assistance to, or otherwise support, terrorists or terrorist organizations. The United States expects UNRWA to maintain constant vigilance in its efforts and actions to fully meet the conditions on U.S. contributions as described in section 301(c).

The Department of State plans to use the activities set forth in the Annex of this Framework as a means to evaluate UNRWA's conformance with the conditions on U.S. contributions to UNRWA set out in section 301(c). To inform the Department of State's evaluation of UNRWA's completion of the Annex activities, UNRWA is expected to provide information to the Department of State every six months regarding actions taken by the organization to ensure conformance with conditions on U.S. contributions to UNRWA, pursuant to section 301(c), and other related issues.

The United States and UNRWA intend to continue to work together throughout 2016 to enhance conformance with the conditions on U.S. contributions to UNRWA pursuant to section 301(c). Specific priority measures recommended for 2016, in addition to those outlined in the Annex, include:

- Continued U.S. support for UNRWA's Operations Support Officer (OSO) programs in the West Bank, Gaza, Jordan, and Lebanon, and the Area Support Officer (ASO) program in Syria, which are essential to helping ensure the neutrality of UNRWA facilities through a regular regime of quarterly formal inspections of all UNRWA facilities, security permitting, and efforts to improve the consistency of OSO operations across fields, with an emphasis on the OSOs' primary function of safeguarding UNRWA's neutrality.
 - Implementation of appropriate recommendations relating to UNRWA put forward by the UN Secretary General's Board of Inquiry investigation into incidents affecting the neutrality of UNRWA's facilities and operations during the Gaza 2014 conflict, as well as implementation of recommendations made by UNRWA's internal Board of Inquiry investigation into the same.
 - New and continued training of UNRWA personnel on the importance of UNRWA's neutrality, including through induction courses for new employees, OSO-led training and workshops, continued implementation of UNRWA's e-ethics course, and e-training on UNRWA's policy on social media use by UNRWA personnel.
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- Strengthening the capacity of UNRWA staff to conduct investigations into credible allegations of misconduct by UNRWA personnel, including for alleged violations of UNRWA policies on neutrality, and consistent application of UNRWA policies regarding completion of such investigations.
 - Clear and consistent levying of administrative or disciplinary action in response to those cases in which personnel have been found to be in violation of UNRWA's regulatory framework, and denial of discretionary benefits to Palestine refugees engaging in inappropriate conduct.

IV. Implementation and Consolidation of Key UNRWA Reforms and Related Initiatives

In recent years, UNRWA has implemented reform initiatives to improve management capacity, increase program quality and efficiency, and increase financial sustainability and accountability. Consistent with the priorities outlined in the 2016-2021 Medium Term Strategy, implementation of UNRWA's reform initiatives is expected to continue in 2016. The United States is particularly interested in:

- Continued progress toward increased budget clarity and improved targeting and prioritization within UNRWA's budgeting process;
- Application of the Agency's pay policy, which promotes parity in salary levels between UNRWA staff and host government officials in comparable sectors/positions;
- UNRWA's development and implementation of a Resource Mobilization Strategy for the period commencing 2016;
- Development of a strengthened system for Agency-wide response to emergencies and the mainstreaming of the protection function across UNRWA fields and programs;
- Further consolidation of programmatic reforms in the health and education sectors and development of a clear and comprehensive reform strategy for the relief and social services sector;
- Ongoing curriculum review process, which enables UNRWA's educators to use consistent criteria in analyzing and enriching local textbooks, in order to promote UN values and principles in UNRWA classrooms ;
- Continued efforts to ensure inclusion of gender, gender-based violence (GBV), and disability considerations in program design and implementation, particularly in UNRWA's emergency response programming, including through implementation of the U.S.-supported *Safe from the Start* initiative on GBV in emergencies;
- Improved tracking of and transparency with regards to implementation of recommendations made via internal UNRWA audits and evaluations, as well as recommendations made by the UN Board of Auditors (UNBOA);
- Development of an anti-corruption strategy within UNRWA;
- Improvements in UNRWA efforts to systematically collect, respond to, and incorporate beneficiary feedback in order to improve the quality and relevance of UNRWA assistance; and
- Efforts to improve the safety and security of UNRWA personnel, particularly those who do not fall under the purview of the UN Department for Safety and Security.

V. Monitoring and Reporting

The United States applauds UNRWA's development of a results-based monitoring system to improve the quality and consistency of UNRWA reporting and to develop a platform that enables UNRWA to better manage its programs and projects to achieve intended results as outlined in the 2016-2021 Medium Term Strategy. The United States also commends UNRWA for the



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development and release of the UNRWA Harmonized Results Report, now in its fifth year, and appreciates the ongoing consultative implementation of this initiative, which ensures that donors' programmatic reporting requirements dovetail with performance measures monitored and consolidated at an organizational level. The United States and UNRWA remain committed to working with other donors to further refine the Results Report. In 2016, UNRWA should continue to strengthen its monitoring and evaluation and internal oversight functions for the effective oversight of UNRWA programs. UNRWA is committed to providing continued financial oversight so that U.S. funds are expended in a manner consistent with U.S. contribution letters.

The United States appreciates UNRWA's commitment to provide consistent and detailed reporting on the use of U.S. funding.

- Reflecting the principles of Good Humanitarian Donorship, the United States believes UNRWA's standardized reporting as included in the UNRWA Harmonized Results Report would satisfy the majority of U.S. reporting requirements for 2016 as they pertain to U.S. contributions to the General Fund. The UNRWA Harmonized Results Report is requested by March 31, 2017, on efforts and results as of December 31, 2016.
- UNRWA is expected to provide to the United States a semi-annual report on actions taken regarding its conformance with conditions on U.S. funding of UNRWA pursuant to section 301(c), as referred to in section III.
- In relation to U.S. contributions to UNRWA's emergency and/or flash appeals for the West Bank and Gaza and UNRWA's Syria regional response, UNRWA is expected to provide two semi-annual consolidated reports outlining results achieved. With regard to UNRWA's emergency programming inside Syria, UNRWA is expected to continue providing information as outlined in the U.S.-UNRWA enhanced monitoring plan for Syria. In addition, UNRWA is expected to report semi-annually on U.S.-funded reconstruction projects in Gaza and Nahr el Bared camp in Northern Lebanon until such time as all U.S. funding for reconstruction is fully expended.
- UNRWA is expected to provide a tailored financial update on U.S. funding to all emergency, flash, and/or reconstruction appeals on a quarterly basis with specific reference to how U.S. funds were expended.
- UNRWA is expected to report semi-annually on U.S.-funded special projects as stipulated by the U.S.-approved project proposals, and to update the United States periodically on its communications strategy with regard to U.S. funding to UNRWA.
- For purposes of U.S. reporting requirements, UNRWA is also expected to provide relevant information pertaining to its implementation of UNBOA recommendations and, in accordance with UN and/or UNRWA procedures and policies, required data for U.S. reporting against the United Nations Transparency and Accounting Initiative (UNTAI).

The United States recognizes that UNRWA works in a highly volatile environment where political and military actions frequently place constraints on the delivery of its services. Furthermore, UNRWA is dependent for the majority of its funding on voluntary contributions provided by UN member states – contributions which fluctuate beyond UNRWA's control. Therefore, it is important that UNRWA's performance against identified indicators be reviewed

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in light of constraints imposed by the operating environment and funding made available to UNRWA.

VI. Continued Support

The United States is committed to continuing its partnership with UNRWA to assist Palestine refugees and other persons registered by UNRWA until a just solution is achieved and UNRWA's mandate ends.

Recognizing the need for early and predictable funding, the United States should endeavor to provide a significant contribution to UNRWA for its 2016 core programs early in the 2016 calendar year. Subject to the availability of funds, the United States endeavors to provide 18-20 percent of General Fund budget requirements.

Subject to the availability of funds, the United States aims to contribute to UNRWA's needs as articulated in its emergency and/or flash appeals for the West Bank, Gaza, and Syria regional response.

In addition, subject to the availability of funds, the United States intends to continue support for selected special projects mutually identified by the United States and UNRWA, including continued support for UNRWA's human rights, conflict resolution, and tolerance education program in all five fields and continued support for the OSO programs in the West Bank, Gaza, Jordan, Lebanon and the ASO program in Syria.

VII. Communications and Consultations

In pursuit of meeting the goals and achieving the results articulated under this Framework, the United States and UNRWA remain committed to continuous information sharing and cooperation at all levels. UNRWA should work closely with the PRM Refugee Coordinator's Office based in Jerusalem and other U.S. Embassy and Consulate-based staff in its fields of operations to inform the United States of developments on the ground and to communicate achievements and challenges throughout the year. UNRWA's Representative Office in Washington serves as the liaison with the Department of State in Washington, DC. UNRWA's Representative Office in New York serves as the liaison to the U.S. Mission to the United Nations in New York.

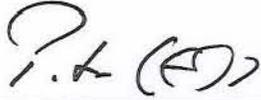
The United States remains an active participant in UNRWA's Advisory Commission, which typically meets twice per year, and should endeavor to provide advice and guidance to UNRWA through its engagement at meetings of the Advisory Commission. The United States continues to serve as Vice-Chair of the Sub-Committee to the Advisory Commission through June 2016 and endeavors to provide leadership and support to the Sub-Committee in its capacity as a technical advisory group to the Advisory Commission.

The United States and UNRWA will regularly consult bilaterally on policy and program issues identified in this Framework.

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Signed on the 13th day of December 2015.



Pierre Krähenbühl
Commissioner-General
United Nations Relief and
Works Agency for Palestine
Refugees in the Near East



Simon Henshaw
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary
Bureau of Population,
Refugees, and Migration
U.S. Department of State

Annex: Activities related to Conformance with U.S. Funding Conditions Pursuant to Section 301(c) of the Foreign Assistance Act, as amended

**ANNEX:
ACTIVITIES RELATED TO CONFORMANCE WITH U.S. FUNDING CONDITIONS
PURSUANT TO SECTION 301(C) OF THE 1961 FOREIGN ASSISTANCE ACT, AS AMENDED**

	Yes	No	Notes
<i>General</i>			
1. Commitment by the Agency to conform to, consistent with UN resolutions and rules, conditions on U.S. contributions as outlined in funding agreements with the U.S. Department of State.			
2. Five meetings every six months between UNRWA and relevant State Department officials in which section 301(c)-related issues are discussed.			
3. Written communication between UNRWA and relevant State Department officials on section 301(c)-related issues.			
<i>Neutrality of staff/personnel</i>			
4. Checks conducted and documented of all UNRWA staff against the Consolidated United Nations Security Council Sanctions List (formerly referred to as the UN 1267/1989 Sanctions Committee's list and the UN 1988 Sanctions Committee's list) once every six months.			
5. Provision of lists of UNRWA staff members to host governments, the Palestinian Authority, Egypt and Israel on an annual basis and other UN member states upon request.			
6. Communication to staff about appropriate behavior consistent with UNRWA's neutrality rules/regulations at least once every year per each of UNRWA's five fields of operation.			
7. Prompt initiation of investigations upon receipt of credible information about alleged staff/personnel misconduct.			

8. Immediate efforts taken to seek information from host countries and other authorities when staff are detained/convicted, etc.			
<i>Neutrality of beneficiaries</i>			
9. Checks conducted and documented of registered Palestinian refugees and other registered beneficiaries against the Consolidated United Nations Security Council Sanctions List every six months.			
10. Conduct of verifications and investigations, as appropriate, upon receipt of credible information about alleged beneficiary conduct of concern and denial of certain forms of service/benefits, when appropriate.			
<i>Neutrality of facilities</i>			
11. Inspection of each UNRWA facility in the West Bank, Gaza, and Lebanon at least twice every six months by UNRWA Operations Support Officers to ensure appropriate use, and at least once every six months in Jordan. Additional inspections of UNRWA installations in Jordan and Syria may be conducted by senior UNRWA staff, security permitting.			
12. Immediate investigation of incidents of misuse of facilities and immediate steps taken to assure non-recurrence, including, in appropriate cases, through seeking third party assistance.			
<i>Neutrality of non-state donors</i>			
13. Checks conducted and documented of all contractors, vendors, and non-state donors against the Consolidated United Nations Security Council Sanctions List every six months.			
14. Inclusion of all appropriate Agency neutrality clauses in Agency contracts, with mechanisms to respond to non-compliance with neutrality clauses, as appropriate.			
15. Accurate, complete, and timely details of UNRWA procurement contracts of aggregate annual value greater than \$100,000 are made publicly available one month after the end of each quarter. Entries are based on consistent use of vendor's names.			